

REMARKS

In response to an earlier restriction requirement and pursuant to a phone conversation with the Examiner on March 8, 2006, Applicant hereby affirms election of Group 1A comprising claims 1-11. Claims 12-17 were canceled in the previous election/amendment and claims 3, 4 and 18-26 are canceled without prejudice or waiver in the present amendment. Thus, claims 1-2 and 5-11 remain pending in the instant application.

In the last Office Action of March 16, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 4 and 8 and objected to claims 1-3, 5-7, 9 and 10. As noted above, claims 3 and 4 have been canceled. Furthermore, claims 1, 2, 5, 9 and 11 have been amended in an earnest effort to expedite a timely allowance of the instant application. The Applicant respectfully requests that the amendments be entered and that the instant application be reconsidered in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejection

In the March 16, 2006 Office Action, claim 1 is rejected to under *35 U.S.C. §112*, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to include sufficient antecedent basis for the limitation in the claim as indicated by the Examiner.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

In the March 16, 2006 Office Action, claims 1-3, 5-7 and 9-10 are rejected under *35 U.S.C. §103* as being unpatentable over Levner et al., US Patent Application No. 2003/0007733 (hereinafter, Levner).

In the March 16, 2006 Office Action, claims 4 and 8 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are indicated as being conditionally allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In order to expedite a timely allowance, the Applicant has amended independent claim 1, to embody the limitations included in conditionally allowed claim 4. In addition, the Applicant has canceled claims 3 and 4 without prejudice. Dependent claims 2, 5, 9 and 11 have been amended for consistency with currently amended claim independent claim 1. The Applicant understands independent claim 1 as amended should now be allowable as amended in view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in the Office Action of March 16, 2006. The Applicant further understands that the remaining dependent claims all of which depend on independent amended as suggested in the March 16, 2006 Office Action, should now be allowable if their respective independent claims are deemed allowable. The Applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the present application as amended.

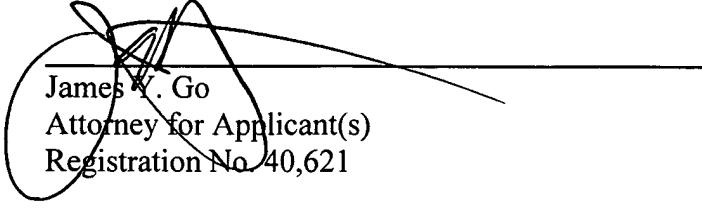
Charge Deposit Account

Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fee(s) that may be due in this matter, and please credit the same deposit account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 4-25-06


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Enclosures: Transmittal Letter
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